



Dexter

School is
in session!

Pupdate 3

Welcome to your February Pupdate

I hope that you and your family are well and had an enjoyable start to the year.

Thank you so much for supporting Guide Dogs by sponsoring a puppy. We can't thank you enough for your continued commitment and support. At any one time, we're responsible for over 8,000 puppies and dogs, and are one of the only organisations worldwide that breeds and nurtures them throughout their lifetime. Without you, we couldn't train life-changing dogs like your sponsored pup – you truly are making a huge difference.

Did you know that one in five people will live with significant sight loss in their lifetime? We're committed to providing the support needed to ensure that everyone with sight loss can live their life exactly as they choose. By sponsoring a puppy, you're helping to transform the lives of both adults and children with visual impairments. Thank you.

I'm pleased to share your sponsored puppy's latest Pupdate with you and I hope you enjoy reading it.

Yours sincerely,

Steph

Steph Potter
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Dexter



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**Hi, it's
Sam here,
Dexter's
trainer.**
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I've been a trainer for seven years now and I'm also a trainee GDMS (Guide Dog Mobility Specialist). I love my job, and it is always so rewarding seeing the dogs partner with their new owner. Seeing them together and having the privilege to witness their partnership is so special. As well as Dexter, I'm also training a yellow Labrador called Tammy. They love playing together during free runs in the park.

Settling in

At first, Dexter was quite nervous when starting at training school and wanted to be with me all the time. This is completely normal; it's such a big change. However, he quickly settled in both here and at home with his lovely fosterers after shadowing their every move for the first few days!

Dexter is such a happy dog and loves people. He's decided who his favourite people are in the office and loves to watch them walk around, hoping for some attention. Dexter has even had the pleasure of reuniting with his brother Victor at training school, and they had the best time playing together, which was very sweet to watch.

He comes in at 8:30am every morning and has a spacious pen in the office where he loves to have his morning cuddles and Kong toy before training. He then goes back to his fosterers' in the afternoon, after some playtime with Tammy, to relax and let the skills he's learnt from his training in the morning sink in during a well-deserved rest.

New skills

Dexter has only recently arrived at training school, so it is early days for him. However, he is already tackling many new skills. He's a very affectionate dog and prefers rewards through strokes and cuddles over food. However, a tasty snack still goes down a treat! Dexter is currently working on loose-lead walking in different environments. He can get distracted by birds and dogs, but this is normal, and he is making progress. Dexter's working on coming in and out of his pen nicely, waiting for the 'release' cue. He's also practising this skill coming in and out of my van, which he is fantastic at. The change from his Puppy Raiser's car to my van didn't faze him at all – he takes everything in his stride! Being comfortable with travelling is a fantastic quality for a guide or buddy dog (a companion for a child with a vision impairment).



Find out how Dexter is settling into training school by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-dexter



Dexter has also been learning chin rest, which is used for health checks in his ears and eyes or to help administer medication. He is happy to rest his chin for a few seconds on a chair, and I'll continue to work on increasing this time. As well as all these skills, we are introducing him to a training harness, which is so exciting! He is such a busy boy learning all these new skills and gaining these experiences.

Looking ahead

Dexter is making great progress. Over the next few months, we will focus on overcoming his distractions and introducing him to other new skills that he will need to become a future life changer. I'm proud of everything he's achieved in the short time he's been with me.

Thank you for sponsoring Dexter. I look forward to updating you with his progress in your next Pupdate in June!





Thanks to your amazing support, you are helping puppies like Dexter move to training school and learn from our guide dog trainers, who will teach them the specialist skills they need for their future role. **Your sponsorship donations contribute towards our guide dog and buddy dog services, costs which can include:**

£8 could support a guide dog partnership for a day.

£16 could buy a coat for one of our puppies in training.

£25 could fund an hour's training for a guide dog.

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